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Hartsfield-Jackson Appoints First Assistant General Manager of Business Diversity

Two-time Emmy® award-winning journalist with 30 years of experience to lead business diversity at ATL

ATLANTA – Elise Durham, a two-time Emmy® and five-time Telly® award-winning journalist and communications professional with nearly 30 years of experience, has been appointed as Assistant General Manager of Business Diversity for Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

“It is truly an honor to welcome back an invaluable member of our senior team, Elise Durham,” said Hartsfield-Jackson General Manager Balram “B” Bheodari. “This newly created role is a significant milestone in our commitment to promoting diversity, fostering an accessible, inclusive world-class airport, developing and retaining diverse talent, and enabling opportunities for minorities and women in the aviation industry. Elise’s expertise, dynamic leadership abilities, along with three decades of impressive experience makes her well-suited to lead ATL’s Business Diversity team.”

This is Durham’s second time leading a department at Hartsfield-Jackson, as she served as ATL’s Director of Policy and Communications from 2018 to 2021. In that role, she was responsible for the positive media coverage of ATL’s handling of Super Bowl LIII, the Airport’s capital improvement program, ATLNext, crisis communications, and the Airport’s commercial filming and photography program.

Prior to her appointment, Durham served as the director of Communications and a member of the executive cabinet for the City of Atlanta for two administrations, offering strategic counsel to previous Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and current Mayor Andre Dickens.

“Thank you to Elise Durham for her dedication and leadership—working day and night to ensure a smooth transition process for the Administration,” said Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens. “I wish her all the best in her new senior role at ATL.”

As Assistant General Manager of Business Diversity, Durham will build upon the work started by Mayor Maynard H. Jackson, Jr. She will expand the Airport’s diversity outreach program and will collaborate with the Planning and Development teams as they continue to provide economic opportunities for communities traditionally underserved by such work.

“I am excited to return to the best airport on the globe to lead the Business Diversity team,” said Elise Durham. “Atlanta has set the standard for minority participation for decades and it is an honor to work closely with the professionals who are charting the course. I look forward to learning how we can expand our diversity efforts even more to ensure that those who want to do business with the airport have the tools they need to succeed.”

Prior to her time with the City of Atlanta, Durham was Executive Producer for Special Projects at the CBS affiliate in Atlanta and before that, she was the Associate Vice President of Communications, Marketing and Media Relations at Florida A&M University (FAMU). Additionally, she has worked at some of the most well-respected television stations in the country, including the market leaders in two Florida cities and in Houston, Texas. She led the expansion of Good Day Atlanta, the flagship franchise across all local Fox- affiliated stations. And as a senior producer at Atlanta’s WSB-TV, she produced the 11 p.m. and 5 p.m. newscasts, rated No. 1 in the country.

Durham is an alumna of FAMU, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in Broadcast Journalism. She is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She currently lives in Lithonia, Georgia.

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Elise Durham
Photo courtesy of Elise Durham

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Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International (ATL) is the world's busiest and most efficient airport. Owned and operated by the City of Atlanta, ATL provides nonstop service to 150 U.S. destinations and 70 international locations in more than 50 countries. ATL was the first airport in history to serve more than 100 million passengers in a calendar year and continues to top passenger totals worldwide. In response to the current pandemic, Hartsfield-Jackson has pivoted to focus on implementing heightened safety protocols while maintaining efficiency and financial stability. The Airport normally boasts a direct economic impact of \$51.5 billion in metro Atlanta and a total direct economic impact of \$82 billion across the Southeast. A frequent recipient of awards of excellence, ATL is recognized for its leadership in concessions, operations, sustainability, architectural engineering, and construction. For more information, visit www.atl.com.